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The Kansas City Missouri Police Department



K-9 Wendy, Interdiction Unit

Social workers join police to protect kids

A unique collaboration between police and social workers is getting children in dangerous situations the help they need much sooner.

It just makes sense, said Crimes Against Children Unit supervisor Sergeant Roy Murry.

"Every case we investigate, the Children's Division investigates also," he said.

Two social workers with the Jackson County Children's Division, Amanda Gulick and Abby Davis, now have their offices in the Crimes Against Children Unit. They take on the most severe cases of abuse and neglect the Unit investigates.

"When all your cases are serious, it can get pretty intense," Gulick said.

They said their assignment is coveted by some of their fellow social workers, but not others.

"Some wish they were here, but others say, 'You get really terrible cases; I don't envy you,'" Davis said.

Sergeant Murry said he and former social worker Tom Bajt talked about such a collaboration for years. Before, officers and detectives played phone tag with social workers. For their safety, social workers had to wait for officers to meet them before they could go into a home to investigate. Crimes Against Children detectives had no way of knowing whether a family had a history of problems that had never come to the attention of law enforcement but was known to social workers, and vice versa. Bajt pushed hard to combine the investigative resources of the state's Children's Division and the KCPD. Once a memorandum of understanding finally was signed between the two, Bajt and Gulick became the first two social workers assigned to KCPD in March 2013 after an interview and application process. Sadly, just two weeks after the thing he'd worked so hard for had come to pass, Bajt was hospitalized and passed away from a hereditary disease at age 42. Davis replaced him later in 2013.

Nearly two years into the collaboration, Sergeant Murry and



State social workers Amanda Gulick, front, and Abby Davis are assigned to the Crimes Against Children Section to co-investigate cases of abuse and neglect with detectives.

social workers Gulick and Davis said their work is now much more streamlined, communications have improved immensely, and children are getting the services they need faster.

Now, the social workers are notified as soon as a report of criminal abuse or neglect comes in, and detectives are immediately notified when a case comes into the social workers' system but has not yet been reported to police. Gulick and Davis can respond to scenes immediately with detectives, and they can interview suspects and witnesses together.

"We can just walk over to each other and ask where we're at on a case," Davis said.

While the detectives and social workers have similar goals, they do differ. Detectives submit cases for prosecution. Social workers must ensure safety of children. Gulick said this can involve educating parents and connecting them with the services they need, or it can mean removing children from their custody.

"For the most part, people want to be good parents, but there are things that impede that like mental illness or drug addiction," Gulick said.

In the worst situations, Gulick or Davis is standing beside police officers to take custody of a child who has to be removed immediately. Officers no longer have to wait on a social worker to respond. Gulick, Davis and other workers in the Children's Division have a rotating call-out schedule.

Gulick and Davis serve as informal liaisons between the Children's Division and KCPD, training the other social workers on how to best work with law enforcement. Sergeant Murry said the arrangement is working so well that he's trying to get more social workers assigned to the Crimes Against Children Unit.

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Prominent crime analyst retires

The woman described as “the equivalent of an intelligence database” retired Jan. 30, leaving detectives wondering what they’re going to do.

“Sandy (Sandra Lentz) has 33 years of policing and investigative knowledge in her head,” said Sergeant Terry Freed of the Perpetrator Information Center. “Detectives relied on her for information, and she rarely failed to deliver.”

Sandra Lentz retired from the police department after 34 years. She was hired as an analyst in 1981 in the Victims Services Unit, now called the Domestic Violence Unit. In 1987, she was assigned to the Perpetrator Information Center, where she remained until retirement.

“She is well known throughout the metropolitan area as a very reliable and resourceful intelligence analyst,” Freed said.

She provided analytical support to both KCPD personnel and outside agency partners. Lentz has worked on nearly every high-profile investigation the Kansas City Missouri Police Department has had in the past 30 years.

Some of the cases she assisted with were serial killer Robert Berdella in 1988, the 1988 explosion that killed six firefighters, Gillham Park strangler Rashan Jackson; Gary Jackman, who was charged with 55 counts of rape; Waldo rapist Bernard Jackson, serial killers Terry Blair and Lorenzo Gilyard; killer Derek Richardson who murdered two women and dumped their bodies in the Northland; 2014 highway shooter Mohammad Whitaker, the Baby Lisa Irwin disappearance, and the recent five murders in the Woodbridge neighborhood last year.

Lentz said she took each case as personally as the families did. She said the Baby Lisa case and the victims who were found dismembered in the Missouri River are a couple of the cases that have meant the most to her because

they never have been solved.

Lentz says the thing she most enjoyed about her job was the challenges. She said detectives would come with all sorts of odd requests. The reason she stayed on the job as long as she did was because she saw the impact the cases had on the detectives.

“They worked so hard on these cases,” she said. “I wanted to do anything I could to help them.” Lentz said the detectives trusted her and made her a better analyst.

As one person after another sang her praises at her retirement ceremony, one common theme that kept popping up about Lentz was her knowledge and experience.

“She always had a sense of what could help a detective further their case before the detective even knew themselves,” Sergeant Doug Niemeier said. “Her experience and the things she knew were not always in a book or written down.”

Sergeant Freed agreed.

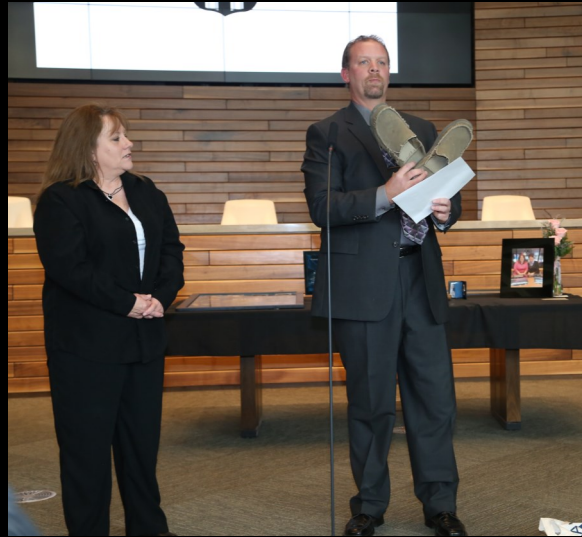
“Sandy knew exactly what detectives wanted,” he said. “She knew what they wanted and the correct format to ensure the information was useful and actionable. Sandy is truly irreplaceable. The department will miss her dearly, and at the same time wishes her happiness as she begins the next chapter in her life.”

Lentz said she will miss her camaraderie with co-workers the most.

“When you work so closely with someone, you learn so much about that person,” she said. “They become your friend, not just a co-worker.”

In retirement, Lentz said she looks forward to being able to do

the things she hasn’t been able to do for so many years. She dreams of possibly getting a couple horses, as she used to ride as a little girl. She wants to travel, go Girl Scout camping, teach her grandkids how to whistle and just get out and be active.



Top: Sergeant Doug Niemeier showed the shoes serial killer Derek Richardson left at a crime scene, which helped crack the case. Sandra Lentz was heavily involved in the investigation.

Bottom: Sergeant Niemeier presented Lentz with her retirement plaque.



Veteran horse departs

Beau, the longest-serving horse in KCPD's Mounted Patrol Section, retired Feb. 11. Beau was part of the original group of horses when the Section was reinstated in 2006. He is the only remaining horse from that group. He is retiring because of age. He's 23. Sergeant Joey Roberts said nearly every officer in the Mounted Patrol Section has ridden Beau, and his bravery taught the other horses how to be courageous, too. The officers hosted a retirement party for him, complete with a special cake. Beau will go back to live with friends of the family who donated him, Bob and Kathy Thompson of Marshall, Mo.



Many responded to "A Call for Backup"

Hundreds responded to the inaugural Police Foundation of Kansas City's (PFKC) "A Call for Backup" fund-raising dinner and auction at the Muehlebach Hotel on February 10.

Keynote speaker was Victims' Rights Advocate and Anti-Crime Activist John Walsh, host of "America's Most Wanted" and "The Hunt with John Walsh." He shared his story of the abduction of his then-only child Adam in 1981 and the lack of resources and assistance he experienced trying to find his son, who was found murdered two weeks later. He supports efforts to supply law enforcement with tools necessary to reduce and solve crime.

PFKC President and CEO Cy Ritter felt Walsh would be a great draw for this event, so he took his idea to the Foundation's Board of Directors, secured their approval and tracked him down.

After meeting Walsh at the airport and discussing the event agenda, Ritter said, "He was wonderful. He wanted to be in with the crowd, eating with everyone else and meeting people."

Funds raised at the event will be used to support the KCPD, focusing on a 9-phase surveillance camera system, and other needs. The PFKC already has purchased portable surveillance cameras and license plate readers with matching city funds for the first phase of the system. Foundation Chair Betsey Solberg led the event, emphasizing the value of the cameras, and their importance in reducing crime. Actual footage of cameras catching criminals in action was shared with guests.

KCPD donated auction items, including a one-hour helicopter tour of duty, a motorcycle/refresher safety course, lunch with Chief Forté, a day with CSI, a SWAT Team search-and-rescue simulation/demonstration, a two-canine demo, a shooting session with the 1933

Thompson Sub-Machine Gun the police department owns and two hours at the Police Officer Driving School. Each item actually sold twice, with the exception of the Tommy Gun Experience – which fetched the highest bid. Auctions alone raised \$21,700, while approximately \$350,000 was raised via sponsorships, auctions and donations.

Though the financial goal wasn't quite met the attendance of 525

guests far exceeded expectations, thanks to an ad in The Independent Magazine, individual invitations, word of mouth and an ESPN Network radio appearance by Ritter.

"We were pretty pleased with the event," Ritter said. "We were hoping to have 300-350 there, but we went well over that attendance goal. For a first-time event, it was a pleasant surprise that it went this well."

Board of Directors member Don Wagner and wife Jean chaired the event, receiving a framed memento along with honorary chairs Mayor Sly James and Chief Darryl Forté. Patricia Kern and Jacque Stouffer, of Kern and Associates, and KCPD Liaison Major Rick Smith coordinated the event. More than 70 sworn and non-sworn KCPD

members served as ambassadors throughout the night, manning registration tables and displays, taking photos, and greeting and directing guests. Patrons were able to fire airsoft pistols, handle weapons, witness the Bomb and Arson robot, see Paco the bomb-sniffing dog in action, and visit with Mounted Patrol and Motorcycle officers.

"Thanks to all of the KCPD members, both uniformed and civilians," Ritter said. "They made the night. That is why the people came. No one could say anything but positive things. Without all of you, it wouldn't have happened. They came to see you, to help you. So many people enjoyed themselves and hopefully we can grow a couple hundred more for next year."



Debby and Gary Ballard and Major Rick Smith met with John Walsh at the inaugural Police Foundation of Kansas City fund-raising dinner on Feb. 10.

Upcoming Events

February 10
Police Foundation Event

February 18
25-Year Ring Ceremony

February 24
**Board of Police
Commissioners Meeting**

March 24
**Board of Police
Commissioners Meeting**

The Informant is a publication of
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Officially Speaking

Awards

Medal of Valor

Officer Michael Bowen

Purple Heart

Officer L. Michael Mast

Certificate of Commendation

Officer Alan Roth

Officer Vickie Rabideaux-Stous

Meritorious Service Award

Officer Luke Ewert

Officer Jacquelynn Hobbs

Human Resource Specialist

Tiffany Clevenger

Life-Saving Award

Officer Dan Bruckner

Officer Curtis Edde

Retirements

Administrative Assistant

Nancy Logan

Administrative Assistant

Tracy Hawkins

Fleet Operations Technician

James Nance

Analyst Sandra Lentz

Obituaries

Retired Sergeant Jacob Lightfoot

The mission of the Kansas City
Missouri Police Department
is to protect and serve with
professionalism, honor
and integrity.